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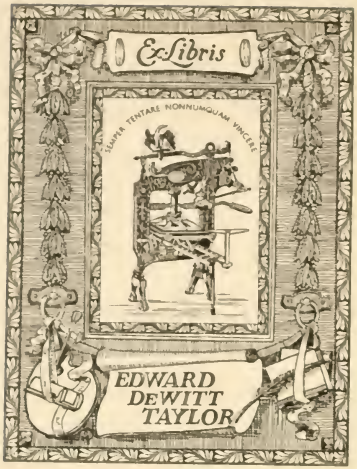
# IN FLANDERS FIELDS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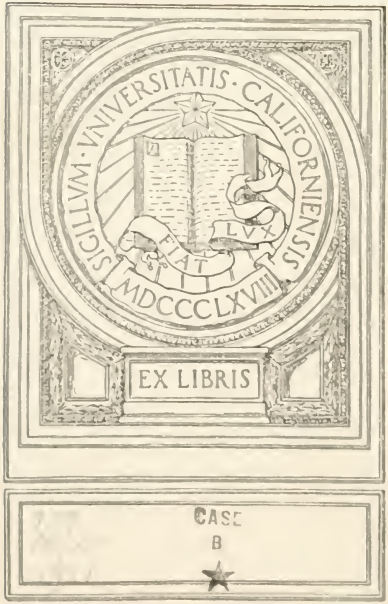
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# IN FLANDERS FIELDS

BY
LIEVT·COL·JOHN McCRAE M·D
CANADIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

## INTRODUCTION BY THE RIGHT REVEREND WILLIAM T. MANNING D.D., D.C.L., BISHOP OF NEW YORK

The poem "In Flanders Fields," more widely-known than any other born of the Great War, came naturally from the soul of John Mc Crae. It is significant of the man who wrote it, that he sent this poem to Punch, where it first appeared in the issue of December 8th, 1915. ⁘ ⁘ John Mc Crae was a lover of all that is good in human life. His comradeship with horses, dogs and children, his uncompromising devotion to duty, his deep, unhesitating religious faith, are the evidences of a noble nature which commanded, in rare degree, the respect and the love, of all. Of Scotch Canadian parentage, he came of stock than which the world knows nothing better. ⁘ ⁘ ⁘ ⁘ The story of his life shows how his character was formed, and how his fine native powers were trained and developed for full use. ⁘

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Physician, soldier and poet he was ready when the occasion came to express himself in words such as we have in these verses. And the occasion came as he bore his part in the World War; in the terrific fighting which marked the second battle of Ypres, for it was there that these lines were written. ⁘ ⁘ ⁘ ⁘

General Morrison writes "The poem was literally born of fire and blood during the hottest phase of the second battle of Ypres. My headquarters were in a trench on the top of the bank of the Ypres Canal, and John had his dressing station in a hole dug at the foot of the bank. ⁘ During periods in the battle, men who were shot, actually rolled down the bank into his dressing station. Along from us a few hundred yards, was the headquarters of a regiment, and many times during the sixteen days of battle, he and I watched them burying their dead whenever there was a lull. Thus the crosses, row on row, grew into a good sized cemetery. Just as he describes we often heard, in the mornings, the larks-

singing high in the air between the crash of the shell and the reports of the guns in the battery just beside us." ⁘ ⁘ ⁘ ⁘

John Mc Crae's life was full of interest. His career in his chosen profession was one of honour and distinction. Sir Andrew Mc Phail tells us that his writings "made his name known in every text book of medecine." He was in active service in South Africa during the Boer War. Enlisting as a private in a Canadian Artillery Unit, he attained the rank of Major: The war ended he returned to his medical career in Canada. From time to time verses of fine quality appeared from his pen; many of them in the Magazine of McGill University. ⁘ At the outbreak of the World War he offered himself at once for service and, again joining the artillery, went to France with the 1st Artillery Brigade of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. Later, somewhat against his will, he was transferred to the Medical Corps, where he gave such service as few could give. In January, 1918, only a few days before his death, he re-

ceived the high honour of appointment as Consulting Physician to the British Armies in the Field. It is no wonder that "In Flanders Fields" became the poem of the army. It is the poem of all those who understand the meaning of the great conflict, and of the sacrifice made, by those who gave themselves for the right. It is the voice of the dear dead calling on us who live, to see that their sacrifice shall not have been in vain. May we be true to the call which John McCrae's words, written at that moment of world crisis, bring to us. ⁘ ⁘ ⁘ ⁘ ⁘ ⁘ ⁘

May we never "break faith" with those who lie "In Flanders Fields." ⁘ ⁘ ⁘ ⁘ ⁘

The victory having been won over brutal and lawless Might, may we win the victory also over all that creates unbrotherliness and ill will among men. ⁘ ⁘ ⁘ ⁘ ⁘ ⁘

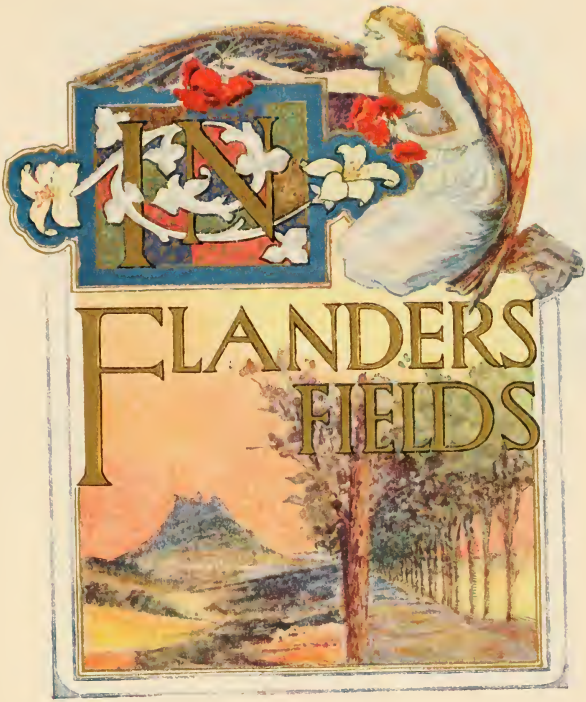
May the peoples of English speech stand in fellowship and brotherhood, with all who love liberty and justice, for those principles for which they together fought, and for the maintenance of right and peace in all the world. ⁘ ⁘

Illuminated by Ernest Clegg, late
of the Bedfordshire Regiment
British Expeditionary Force.

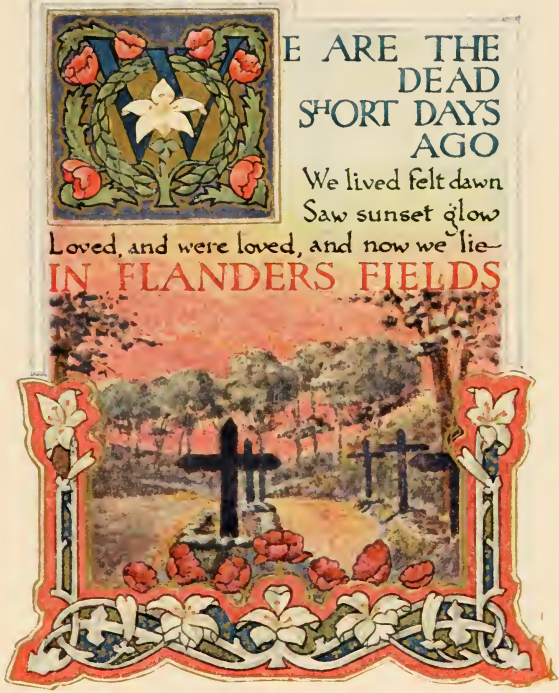
# DEDICATED

to those who died in the Great War.
1914 - 1919

City of New York. MCMXXI


IN
FLANDERS
FIELDS

IN FLANDERS FIELDS
THE POPPIES GROW
Between the crosses row on row
That mark our place & in the sky
The larks still bravely singing fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below


WE ARE THE DEAD
SHORT DAYS AGO
We lived felt dawn
Saw sunset glow
Loved, and were loved, and now we lie—
IN FLANDERS FIELDS

TAKE VP OVR QVARREL WITH THE FOE

To you from failing hands we throw
The Torch, Be yours to lift it high
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep tho' poppies blow
IN FLANDERS FIELDS

Two hundred and sixty-five
copies printed by William Edwin
Rudge for his friends.
Christmas 1921

McCrae, J
In Flanders fields
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